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It is held that de facto segregation and integration have no practical definitions. Racial balance alone does not offer an accurate definition of segregation. Statistics were presented on the degree of racial segregation in the District. The influx of new pupils from outside the District was considered. School policies and practices in relation to race included discussion of assignment of pupils, assignment of teachers and school officers, management of instruction, distribution of resources, and programs to broaden cultural opportunities. Previous methods used in attempts to end racial imbalance in Washington schools were evaluated. These included the open-school policy and busing of children, boundary changes for achieving better racial balance, site selection for biracial school membership, educational parks, and the neighborhood school idea. A fourteen-point program for meeting the problems of de facto segregation was proposed and discussed.

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RESPONSE TO THE WASHINGTON URBAN LEAGUE REPORT ENTITLED "INTEGRATION AND THE WASHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

Carl F. Hansen
Superintendent of Schools

September 1, 1964

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RESPONSE TO THE WASHINGTON URBAN LEAGUE REPORT ENTITLED "INTEGRATION AND THE WASHINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS"

by

Carl F. Hansen
Superintendent of Schools

September 1, 1964

This is a response to the Washington Urban League Report entitled "Integration and the Washington Public Schools," which was presented to the Board of Education on June 23, 1964. The central theme is de facto segregation, the extent of it, and the challenge confronting the school system to ameliorate the effects of it through the attainment of a "sound integrated school system."

Among the many values of the Washington Urban League Report, the foremost is that it occasions a review of the problems of education in an urban school system like that of the District of Columbia. The Board of Education and the school administration have long been aware of the special urgency of their task of developing a school program that is geared to the needs of city children. But new conditions and requirements are developing, of which de facto segregation forms a center for concern and action.

Much can be learned from the experiences of other cities in their treatment of de facto segregation. Consideration of the Washington Urban League Report, therefore, will include reference to several recent studies of the same problem, particularly in

Chicago and New York City, and a general overview of the possibilities of stepping up the attack upon the problems of de facto segregation in the District of Columbia.

WHAT IS DE FACTO SEGREGATION?

A number of court cases suggest that segregation may be a constitutional deprivation to a pupil even with the "absence of discriminatory conduct by the school board."

In Jackson v. Pasadena City School District, the California Supreme Court said:

"Where . . . [residential] segregation exists it is not enough for a school board to refrain from affirmative discriminatory conduct. The harmful influence on the children will be reflected and intensified in the classroom if school attendance is determined on a geographic basis without corrective measures."[1/]

While the constitutional issue is in no way clearly determined as it relates to de facto segregation, the presence of the question before numerous judicial and legislative bodies has elicited many definitions of school segregation based upon the percent of Negroes and whites attending a school.

Recognizing the need for setting a figure for defining a segregated Negro or white school, the Washington Urban League Report defines a segregated school as one "in which 85% or more of the pupils are of one race or another."

1/ 1963 Staff Report, PUBLIC EDUCATION. Submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. Quote: Jackson v. Pasadena City School District, 382 p. 2d 878, (California, 1963), page 67.

Numerical definitions of de facto segregated schools ranging from 46 to 99 percent have been proposed either by the courts, school administrators, or civil rightists. Against the variety of proposals the 85% figure proposed by the Washington Urban League is not unreasonable. In any case, however, to define a segregated school as one with a given percentage of biracial membership tends to be difficult to support from sociological, educational, or psychological findings. To the knowledge of the Superintendent no scientific research exists to justify a conclusion that the adverse effects of racial imbalance in a school disappear at the 85% point or at any other numerical cutoff point.

A de facto segregated school is defined in the 1964 New York City report as one enrolling "less than 10% Negroes and/or Puerto Ricans, or if it enrolled less than 10% from other groups. Other is here defined to mean white, a term which included Orientals, Indians, et cetera. 1/

The authors of the Chicago report have the following to say about the definition of "segregated" and "integrated":

"There is no standard definition of a 'segregated' or an 'integrated' school. Two definitions are considered here. One considers as an integrated school any school in which 10 percent or more of the students are either Negro or 'other' and at least 10 percent are white. The second definition considers as integrated

1/ DESEGREGATING THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NEW YORK CITY. A Report Prepared for the Board of Education of the City of New York by the State Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions, May 12, 1964. Page 2.

only those schools with at least 10 percent Negro and 10 percent white. The second of these definitions is used in this report, because it was the task of the Panel to focus on Negro-white interrelationships."[1/]

After extensive review of the administrative decisions as to the definition of a segregated school, the Staff of the U. S. Civil Rights Commission stated that "The courts will have to decide what concentration of a minority group within a school or other conditions are essential to a finding that segregation in fact exists."[2/]

The Commission Staff then declared:

"For pragmatic reasons a maximum proportion of 90 percent of pupils of one race was adopted as a definition of a segregated school."[3/]

DOES RACIAL BALANCE ALONE OFFER AN ACCURATE DEFINITION OF SEGREGATION?

Should school segregation be determined solely on the numerical balance of the white and Negro enrollment?

In the Gary Case, the court found no authority to support the view that a school was a segregated Negro school if it enrolled more than a given percent of Negro pupils.

The court held that:

"A simple definition of a segregated school . . . is a school which a given student would be otherwise eligible to attend, except

1/ Report to the Board of Education, City of Chicago by the Advisory Panel on Integration of the Public Schools, March 31, 1964, page 14.

2/ 1963 Staff Report, PUBLIC EDUCATION. Submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. page 83.

3/ Ibid. page 83.

for his race or color, or, a school which a student is compelled to attend because of his race or color."[1/]

This was the generally accepted definition of racial segregation prior to the 1954 Supreme Court decision. Even the 1963 Staff Report to the U. S. Civil Rights Commission accepts this view while at the same time it attempts to formulate a definition of de facto segregation.

The following is quoted from a footnote accompanying a summary of the increase in desegregation in certain Southern States.

"The problems of definition are replete here. For the purpose of this exposition, a school district is defined as segregated if it (1) has Negro children of school age living within its jurisdiction, and (2) requires all of them to attend all-Negro schools because of their race. A school district is desegregated by policy if there is (1) an expressed official policy that Negroes are eligible to attend all-white schools, but (2) no Negro has in fact done so. School districts desegregated in practice are those which actually have some Negroes attending schools with white pupils."[2/]

If a school is segregated only because of rules, law, or administrative action promulgated by the school board or its staff, in the absence of such action does segregation in fact occur? This is the central point of the Gary Case. The principle extends the meaning of segregation far beyond the simple, limited numerical determination proposed by many who are concerned about racial composition in relation to educational quality.

1/ 1963 Staff Report, PUBLIC EDUCATION. Submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. page 72.

2/ Ibid., page 7.

It is conceivable that the term "segregation" does not properly describe an unbalanced racial composition of a school when the causes are social, economic, traditional, and experiential. There are many communities in this nation where no colored families reside. Are the schools in those communities segregated because the enrollment is 100% white?

In such schools responsible authorities ought to do everything possible to educate for life in a multi-racial national and international community. But tc apply the opprobrious term de facto segregation to such schools would be illogical.

City schools, where racial imbalance occurs, are counterpart examples if the condition is produced not by law but by individual choice, or by economic factors which limit choice. Because the term "segregation" is applied, the assumption is sometimes derived that school government is responsible.

How can school authorities manage the social and economic causes of racial imbalance by orders or rules and regulations? How can the segregation produced by the action of individuals rather than of law be in conflict with constitutional principles? The question raised therefore is this: Is it not misleading and productive of error in treatment to use the term de facto segregation to name a condition not produced by law?

Economic factors influence grouping in a way that is more severe and persistent than racial factors. Many white children suffer the same cultural limitations that many colored children do. In such cases,

poverty, illness, social irresponsibility, and ignorance are causative. The end result is the same, and while no one speaks of the segregation by poverty which adversely affects many children regardless of race, educators have the general responsibility of providing compensatory benefits for all children who are cultural isolates.

The current racial definition of de facto segregation ought to be abandoned in favor of one which describes cultural isolation wherever it exists in urban, suburban, and rural America.

WHAT IS THE DEGREE OF RACIAL SEGREGATION IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA SCHOOLS?

For a complete analysis of the racial segregation factor in a school system two elements must be considered. These are: (1) the racial composition of school enrollments, and (2) school policies and practices in relation to race.

1. School Enrollments by Race.

In October 1963, 85.7% of the total school enrollment was colored. Ten years before that in 1953, 56.8% of the school enrollment was colored.

In 1953, 44,897 white pupils were enrolled in the public schools compared with 19,956 white pupils ten years later. During the same period, the number of Negro pupils increased from 58,936 to 119,200. The percent of colored enrollment places immediate limitations upon the curtailment of de facto segregation whether through open enrollment, zoning, or any other method.

2. Number of schools with 90 percent or more colored or white enrollment.

In 1963, with a school enrollment 85.7% colored, 123 schools were 90 percent or more colored and 18 were 90 percent or more white.

Accepting 90 percent as the point at which a school is considered de facto segregated, then 141 (78.7 percent) of the 179 District schools were de facto segregated in 1963.

The racial composition by schools in October 1963 is evident in the following summary:

TABLE SHOWING THE RACIAL COMPOSITION OF DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN OCTOBER 1963

Percentage	Number of buildings that are: More than 50% White	More than 50% Colored
50 - 59	3	6
60 - 69	4	2
70 - 79	2	5
80 - 89	2	14
90 - 99	14	100
100	4	23
	29	150

3. Number of pupils attending schools with biracial memberships.

Still another view of the biracial factor in our school system is available in the number of pupils attending schools with any degree of biracial membership. The District of Columbia Public Schools are unusual in the fact that in 1963 white and colored pupils were going to school together in 152 schools out of a total of 179. In many of these schools there will be only a few white or colored pupils, but nevertheless the complete separation that exists in the ghetto-like schools does not for the most part exist in the Washington school

system. In fact the formula and the practice for residential integration already exist in this city, and with proper conditions can be used to reverse the prevailing outflow of white parents with children of school age.

Altogether 118,939 pupils (85.5%) in 139,156 attended biracial schools in October 1963. If de facto segregation is defined as a state of complete separation by race, the condition would be limited to less than 15 percent of the total school enrollment in the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Since de jure segregation is complete separation by law, de facto segregation may also be defined as complete separation resulting from other than the force of law.

4. Changes in racial composition of school enrollments from 1949 through 1963.

The rate of reduction in white enrollment for the years 1949-1963 ranged from .01% in 1952 to 10.8% in 1957. The lowest percent of reduction of white enrollment since desegregation in 1954 was 4.9 percent in 1961.

The rate of increase in colored enrollment for the years 1949-1963 ranged from 4.8 in 1950 to 8.7 in 1954.

The rapid and persistent rate of reduction of white enrollment significantly invalidates any pupil assignment policy based on the idea of moving Negro children into white schools or white children into Negro schools.

The following table shows the rate of change in white and colored enrollment for 1949 to 1963.

TABLE SHOWING PERCENT OF ENROLLMENT INCREASE OR DECREASE OVER THE PRECEDING YEAR BY RACE FOR 1949 THROUGH 1963

	All Schools -- Kindergarten through Teachers College					
	White			Colored		
School Year	Pupil Membership	Inc. or Dec. Over the Preceding Year No.	Pct.	Pupil Membership	Inc. or Dec. Over the Preceding Year No.	Pct.
1949-50	48,874			45,798		
1950-51	46,736	-2,138	- 4.4	47,980	+2,182	+ 4.8
1951-52	46,173	- 563	- 1.2	50,763	+2,783	+ 5.8
1952-53	46,171	- 2	- .01	54,716	+3,953	+ 7.8
1953-54	44,897	-1,274	- 2.8	58,936	+4,220	+ 7.7
1954-55	41,393	-3,504	- 7.8	64,080	+5,144	+ 8.7
1955-56	38,768	-2,625	- 6.3	68,877	+4,797	+ 7.5
1956-57	34,758	-4,010	-10.3	73,723	+4,846	+ 7.0
1957-58	32,003	-3,755	-10.8	79,111	+5,388	+ 7.3
1958-59	29,569	-2,434	- 7.6	84,650	+5,539	+ 7.0
1959-60	27,481	-2,088	- 7.1	90,403	+5,753	+ 6.8
1960-61	24,982	-2,499	- 9.1	97,897	+7,494	+ 8.3
1961-62	23,762	-1,220	- 4.9	104,720	+6,823	+ 7.0
1962-63	22,280	-1,482	- 6.2	112,095	+7,375	+ 7.0
1963-64	19,956	-2,324	-10.4	119,200	+7,105	+ 6.3

INFLUX OF NEW PUPILS FROM OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT

Another limitation on the control of de facto segregation is the annual influx of more than 7,000 new pupils, most of whom come from the Middle Atlantic and Southeastern States.

TABLE SHOWING NUMBER OF NEW PUPILS WHO ENTERED FROM OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL DISTRICT FOR THE YEARS 1955 THROUGH 1963

School Year	Entries from:				
	Maryland	Virginia	Other States and Territories	Non-public Schools	Total
1955-1956	1,442	1,181	3,928	1,294	7,845
1959-1960	1,483	1,296	4,527	1,462	8,768
1960-1961	1,504	1,191	4,490	1,524	8,709
1961-1962	1,401	1,101	4,684	1,593	8,779
1962-1963	1,455	1,093	4,726	1,673	8,947

SCHOOL POLICIES AND PRACTICES IN RELATION TO RACE

The Urban League Report describes de facto segregation as a "state of affairs in which great numbers of white and Negro children attend what are basically separate and racially homogeneous schools," but disavows concern about "the forces and influences which have produced the condition."

In this respect, only the symptoms are defined, a method that characterizes much of the current thinking and action on de facto segregation in other cities. As a result correctives have been designed to eliminate the symptoms rather than the causes, suggesting that such solutions as, for example, the arbitrary moving of children to achieve a better racial balance in schools offers at best only temporary benefits. Plans to reduce de facto segregation that do not get at the basic causes are destined to fail, or even worse create greater confusion and loss of educational advancement than if they were not undertaken.

The Urban League Report further declares that "de facto segregation has for all members of the community a meaning equivalent to that school system where the races are divided by law."

This position totally ignores the fact that school policies and practices determine whether a school system is integrated or segregated. The total effect of such policies upon the education of children is far greater than the physical fact of racial composition in the schools. To disregard the constructive effects of integrative

school policies and practices is to ignore the major contribution the schools can make to the amelioration of the bad effects of de facto segregation.

The following is a digest of the major ways by which the District school system "integrates" its program.

1. Assignment of Pupils.

No pupil in our school system is assigned to any school or class on the basis of race.

It is likely, indeed, that any assignment of pupils by race to achieve biracial distribution of pupils is as unconstitutional as the assignment by race to prevent integration.

School assignment by race is discriminatory. Any such act, even when designed to achieve a desirable end, may ultimately support purposes which are undesirable.

The equating of de facto with de jure segregation seems wholly incomprehensible in view of the legal freedom of choice now available to citizens -- a freedom of choice which is proscribed under de jure segregation.

In this school system before 1954, if a colored pupil lived next door to a white school he could not enroll in it, nor under similar circumstances could a white pupil enroll in a colored school. Now pupils attend schools within their own zones regardless of race. If the parents change residence their children will attend the new school regardless of race. Even the greatest unhappiness with the effects of de facto segregation should not lead to the error of equating it with de jure segregation.

2. Assignment of Teachers and School Officers.

Teachers in the District of Columbia are appointed, assigned, and promoted, not by race, but on merit.

On October 17, 1963, of 5,378 persons employed under the Teachers' Salary Act, 3,947 (73.4 percent) were Negro.

Among the 311 educational school officers, 167 (53.7 percent) are Negro. In every case, the incumbents competed with white candidates. As front rank educators by every standard, they perform their duties, not as Negro educators, but as educators, just as do white members of the staff.

The extent of Negro staffing, as well as the generalized functions of Negro staff members, generalized in the sense they work as educational leaders rather than as Negro educational leaders, is in all likelihood unique in the history of American education. As a contrast, attention is called to the staffing situation in New York City:

"It should be possible to find more than the present group of fewer than 10 Negroes who are competent to handle some of the system's more than 1,200 administrative positions."1/

1/ "Desegregating the Public Schools of New York City, A Report Prepared for the Board of Education," by the State Education Commissioner's Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions, May 12, 1964, page 21.

3. Management of Instruction.

The school system plans its instructional program as a unit; school personnel work together, plan educational programs together, and conduct all aspects of their professional duties without regard to race. Even though the staff of a given school may be all white or all colored, the members participate in area and city-wide professional activities with others of different races.

All professional materials, supplies, curriculums, and projects are managed in a unified program. None of the separateness usually applied to segregation exists in any staff function.

At the pupil level, the application of instructional methods, the use of curriculum and textual materials, and the supervision of teachers are unified functions.

It is doubtful that the separateness and isolation implied in the term segregation exists when a school program in its totality is planned and carried out on a non-racial, non-segregated basis. Certainly, the present unified administration of the school system is vastly different from the divided administration of the segregated system prior to 1954. Educational ghettos cannot possibly exist under the methods of management current in this school system.

Finally, the determination of this school administration is to establish and to achieve educational goals at a level necessary for participation in the total society rather than in a racially or

culturally defined sub-society. This means that achievement standards are uniformly set for all schools, and, while many pupils fall short of attaining these levels, the objective is to see that the highest goals are ultimately accomplished.

There is, therefore, a single set of standards for the school system. There are variations in levels of attainment by pupils, but the effort to bring achievement up to standard in every school continues without abatement. A single set of goals, neither for Negroes nor for whites, but for all students preparing to enter a highly competitive society determines the educational effort of this school system. The objective thus described avoids educational segregation by race.

4. Distribution of Resources.

Unified policies now govern the selection, appointment, and assignment of teachers. This policy results in a single examination for teachers, not different sets of examinations for colored and white teachers such as were used in the segregated school system prior to 1954. Thus one set of recruitment standards replaced a double standard. This eliminates segregation in personnel selection even though the pupils in a school may be of one race only.

Teachers and officers are assigned where needed rather than on race. The result is the Negro teachers and officers are often assigned to predominantly white schools and vice versa.

Allocation of staff is by the formulas established by the Board of Education so that to the extent possible class loads are

equalized throughout the city. Variations occur only when conditions such as smallness of enrollment or largeness of enrollment decrease or increase the teaching load. The unified management of personnel resources now taking place in this school system is far different from the divided management that preceded integration. At that time imbalances of a severe kind existed between the white and colored divisions of the school system.

The foregoing illustrations show the integrative effect of unified school management. The result is that the adverse influences of separateness by race are mitigated to a significant extent by the unified way in which school resources are assigned.

5. Programs to Broaden Cultural Opportunities.

Teachers and officers have never been content to allow children to remain isolated in their schools and neighborhoods. But in recent years the rate and scope of travel, excursions, school exchanges have been greatly increased.

Teachers take children even as far as Canada, to New York, to Williamsburg. They arrange for local visits to places of business, to farms and dairies, to museums and art galleries, to the zoo, and to college campuses.

Since 1954, interscholastic sports activities, which have an integrative effect as well as sometimes a disintegrative effect, have been sustained at full level. Student activities involve all schools in such programs as the Interhigh Student Council, the High School Students for Better Schools, the Interhigh Orchestra and

Chorus, all of which provide broad experiences which prevent the development of ghetto-type schools.

OPEN SCHOOL POLICY AND BUSSING OF CHILDREN

While the community schools are zoned in the District of Columbia, the voluntary transfer of pupils from crowded schools to schools that are under capacity has long been permitted if requested by the parents who accept the responsibility for transportation and general protection of their children.

To implement this policy, school bussing at public expense is proposed, somewhat obliquely, to be sure, in the Urban League Report statement as follows:

"Under a positive policy of integration the school system should initiate a program of transfers and accept the transportation policies necessary for such shifts."

The principle is that when children attend school at considerable distance from their homes the school system should provide transportation.

The issue has been persistently discussed since as early as 1949, if not before that time.

At that time, the proposal was to transport children from certain southeast schools to schools in the northwest to relieve overcrowding, to cut down on part time, and to reduce the amount of school construction otherwise needed.

At that time the school administration and the Board of Education rejected the proposal. The present school administration is

equally strong in its position against the bussing at public expense of able-bodied children for any reason.

The reasons for this position are as follows:

1. Public transportation is available at low cost through public subsidy for pupils who live beyond walking distance of a school.

2. If school transportation is provided for any able-bodied pupils who live beyond walking distance of their school it must in equity be provided for all.

Though now unpredictable, the ultimate cost of school transportation would certainly become excessive as the pressures for service mount once the program is established.

3. The expedient of seeking to relieve overcrowding through transportation of pupils tends to become a permanent operation, thus perpetuating the program as long as any unused space is available. This slows the construction of needed school buildings.

4. The disadvantages of removal from the community school include loss of school-home contacts, lack of support of the school by the parent and of the parent by the school, difficulties in adjustment of incoming pupils to the new school, difficulties in forming close ties with fellow pupils because of the absence of neighborhood play, waste of time in travel over excessive distances, and an increase in hazards to safety and morals in extended absence from home.

5. The assignment of pupils to schools by race, with or without school transportation, is of doubtful constitutionality.

To achieve any improvement of racial balance, both colored and white pupils would of necessity be required to attend schools out of their neighborhood. The selection would be on race, and would have to provide an interchange of pupils into and out of predominantly colored and white schools. Clearly this policy could not be defended on constitutional grounds.

This view is supported by the authors of the 1963 Staff Report to the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights.

"The goal of a heterogeneous racial school population may be socially desirable, but it seems doubtful that the 14th Amendment permits it to be promoted by school authorities by denying individual pupils admission (or transfer) to a public school on racial grounds. Whatever else the School Segregation Cases may mean, it seems clear that they do not permit denial of admission to any public school solely on basis of race." 1/

If this principle is governing in the case of a denial of admission to a school because of race, it also should apply with equal force to the required attendance in a school because of race. Colored pupils selected to attend predominantly white schools would be denied admission to their home school on account of race. In predominantly white schools in like manner white pupils selected for transfer to a predominantly colored school would be denied admission to their own school on account of race.

1/ 1963 Staff Report, PUBLIC EDUCATION. Submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights, page 75.

6. To be effective and equitable, the transfers of pupils to achieve a better balance would have to be required. The involuntary transfer of a part of the enrollment of any school is in itself a discriminatory act. The pupils who are permitted to remain in their neighborhood schools will in the main be advantaged over those who are forced to leave their neighborhoods to attend school. Or, if conditions are such that the pupils who are selected for transfer are advantaged, then those forced to remain in the neighborhood school are discriminated against. In any case, the involuntary transfer plan proposed by the Urban League and tried out with dismal results in a number of cities is inherently discriminatory. Aside from the principle involved the application of the transfer principle would produce such a crop of emotion-charged difficulties that the school community would regret the day it embarked on such a course.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, the Superintendent will continue to recommend vigorously against a change in the current school policy of supplying transportation only for the physically or mentally handicapped pupils for whom neighborhood facilities cannot be supplied.

BOUNDARY CHANGES FOR ACHIEVING BETTER RACIAL BALANCE

Children coming into the city in most cases enter already overcrowded schools. Very little flexibility for changing school boundaries exists because, except for a relatively small number of schools not

contiguous to the congested schools, most District schools are at capacity or above. Nevertheless, the heads of each school level annually study boundary lines to obtain the maximum possible balance in school enrollments for better education. The purpose is not primarily to get better racial distribution but to obtain better balance in the use of school facilities.

Natural barriers to access to a school such as parks, railroads, and heavily traveled roads, the proximity of pupils' residences, and the local systems of public transportation are the governing factors in defining school boundaries. Where these conditions can be accommodated at the same time that racial balance can be improved, then the latter factor should be given consideration. But definitions of boundaries that violate the basic tenets of good school management solely to include or exclude pupils of a given race is a gerrymander that is ethically wrong and very probably unconstitutional.

To set a boundary that will deny a child admission to a school in his neighborhood because of his race, even if done to reduce the level of segregation in a school, is evil in principle and dangerous in the precedent it sets. A wrongful act designed to accomplish a good purpose will sooner or later be used to accomplish a bad purpose.

SITE SELECTION FOR BIRACIAL SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP

The report suggests that new sites for schools in areas with multi-racial population or where populations are in flux should be selected either to maintain the existing racial balance or to attract white, child-bearing families back to Washington.

In accordance with sound administrative practice, school sites are selected for advantageous access by the pupils to be served. Already described in this report, such factors as natural physical boundaries, location of residence in relation to the school, public transportation available to the area, and traffic hazards are prime factors in site selection.

To deviate from these principles will lead to bad educational planning. The disadvantages of misplacement of schools continue throughout the length of their service. The racial composition of neighborhoods, on the other hand, changes and a temporary advantage sought in a racially oriented site selection may be extremely transient.

The fluidity in the racial composition of neighborhoods offers the possibility of changing the racial balance of a school community by providing top quality schooling.

Our experience shows that high quality schools will attract white child-bearing families if the neighborhoods are safe and the housing acceptable.

The building itself must be attractive, either through modernization or replacement. Absolutely mandatory in any case is superior building maintenance to avoid the shabby, unpainted,

repelling appearance that characterizes too many of our public institutions.

The Board of Education is aware of the physical deterioration of many of its school buildings. It has asked for the increases in maintenance funds needed to eliminate this condition. This program plus an adequate building program for the replacement or modernization of structures and the construction of new buildings where needed on carefully selected sites should have the full support of the community the Commissioners, and the Congress.

Moreover, action to meet construction needs should be immediate and comprehensive. In the past two fiscal years, significant improvement in appropriations for this purpose has occurred. In Fiscal Years 1964 and 1965 the amount for Capital Outlay totalled $30,031,000, far better than the $6,633,729 average of the preceeding ten years. However, even this rate of appropriations is too low to meet the immediate needs of the school district.

EDUCATIONAL PARKS -- AN EVALUATION

The Urban League Report looks with favor upon the establishment of large school parks to which pupils in grades 4-6 would be transported, while children in the kindergarten through the third grade would remain in neighborhood schools.

Reference is made to the report of the New York State Education Commissioners' Committee on the New York City Schools.

The authors of the New York City Report proposed that school complexes (sometimes called educational parks) be set up to obtain racial balance. 1/

The Board of Education may be interested in a summary and evaluation of the "school complex" proposal.

The essentials of the New York recommendation are as follows:

1. Construct and develop four-year comprehensive high schools. The junior high school system would be discontinued by the transfer of the ninth grade to the high school.

2. Such vocational courses as are to be continued should be distributed among the comprehensive schools rather than concentrated in wholly specialized vocational units. 2/

1/ The educational parks plan was proposed in the report entitled "Desegregating the Public Schools of New York City" by the State Education Commissioners' Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions.

2/ New York Report, Op. Cit., p. 15.

3. High schools should be open on a city-wide basis "with no restrictions except those needed to prevent the overcrowding of particular schools."[1/]

4. The middle schools include grades 7 and 8 of the junior high schools and grades 5 and 6 of the elementary school.

5. The primary schools will include the pre-kindergarten group, and the kindergarten through grade 4. This unit should be on a non-graded basis.

The primary unit should enroll no more than 500 pupils. If larger buildings are used, two or more units may be organized in a building.

6. These will be neighborhood schools so that parents may become involved and close contact be set up between the home and school.

7. "Neighborhood primary schools and nearby middle schools should be combined into clusters that, for want of a more descriptive term, we shall call educational complexes."[2/]

"The educational complex should consist of two to five primary schools and one or two middle schools."[3/]

1/ "Desegregating the Public Schools of New York City" by the State Education Commissioners' Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions, p. 15.

2/ New York Report. Op. Cit., p. 18.

3/ New York Report. Op. Cit., p. 18.

8. A senior administrator is to be appointed for each complex. Primary school units are to share faculties, facilities, and special staff. Frequent association among students and parents from the several units should be provided.

The most significant feature of the school complex proposal as presented in the New York and Urban League Reports is the deliberate centering of large numbers of younger children in one location primarily in the hope that a higher degree of integration will occur. The expectation is that by this process integration will be maintained.

Speaking of the Takoma Park area, the Urban League statement reads as follows: "If this school were enlarged to take as many as 2500 children[1/] from the four participating schools,[2/] there would be a significant degree of stabilization produced in this vital neighborhood."

From the educational point of view, this plan and that of the New York Report needs to be examined for feasibility. Indeed, it is doubtful if these proposals have to any significant degree been researched to predict answers to questions like these:

1. Will the plan accomplish a lasting racial balance?

2. Is the permanent transportation of small children long distances to enter a large complex possible without traumatic experiences?

1/ From the context it is believed the children would be those in grades 4-6.

2/ It is assumed these are Takoma Park, Shepherd, Whittier, and Brightwood.

3. Will setting up still another separation between segments of the school at the end of the third grade further segment what should be a continuum of experience?

4. Will the large school complex become even more culturally isolated than the neighborhood school? In other words, is it not possible that the concentration of thousands of pupils in one center will produce an educational centrifuge where experience is confined largely to what goes on within the unit?

The image created by the school complex proposal is that of the beehive, isolated, impacted, and automation-like in its social structure.

5. Should the developing concept of the school as a multi-service community center be abandoned, as it would be under the school complex proposal?

6. Should the junior high school be abandoned, a development in American education once considered the best answer to the question of the education of the preadolescent? What research justifies this course of action?

7. What is the cost of a school reorganization plan which entails an abandonment of the junior high school system and an expensive revision in the use of junior high school buildings?

The eminent educators who prepared the New York Report recommended prompt adoption of the school complex plan as if they themselves had resolved all administrative and educational doubts. Like the pioneer trails of early America, the educational frontier glistens with the

bleached bones of schemes and themes that came to bad ends mainly because they were ill-thought out and insufficiently tested. The school complex proposal of the New York Committee, and, in a more limited sense, of the Urban League Report, is unlikely to survive unless a vastly greater amount of research and development precedes its adoption.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL - A PRINCIPLE THAT PUTS PEOPLE FIRST

The concept of the neighborhood school was at one time considered the most important assurance of democracy in education.

In the early stages of desegregation and in the years before that, a just claim was made that it was unfair to make Negro children walk past white schools. The irresistible logic was this: Let children go to school where they live.

Since 1954, the year of the desegregation cases, the Washington school system has been organized on the principle of the neighborhood school. Boundary lines are drawn with the residences of pupils in mind and to achieve maximum use of school space. School sites are selected for their availability to the clients being served. A fundamental principle is that no child shall be denied admission to his neighborhood school. The exceptions are made on a non-racial basis:

1. If a child cannot succeed in a neighborhood school, he may be assigned to another school where there is a special class for children with his kind of problems.

2. If he is severely physically handicapped he may be assigned, at the recommendation of the Health Department, to a city-wide health school.

3. In any case a request for transfer from a neighborhood school will be approved only for special purposes, as in the case of a city-wide technical school, such as McKinley Technical High School, and the city-wide Amidon Elementary School, which is now

becoming less and less available for pupils outside its boundaries because of the increase in the number of children moving into the Amidon area.

4. Voluntary transfers are also permitted from overcrowded areas to schools which are under capacity, not on the basis of race but on the basis of overcrowdedness in the local schools.

Most children attend schools in their own neighborhoods, parents participate in school activities and form attachments to their schools as neighborhood centers. The buildings themselves are used for recreational purposes and increasingly for other community purposes. The trend is toward building multi-purpose schools not only for the education of children but also for civic, social, and cultural activities in the community.

The objective of the school system must be to provide maximum educational opportunity for the children where they live, to assist them to improve their economic conditions, to help them to acquire experience in working with the total community through special instruction, and to be prepared either to move out of the slums or to reconstruct city living to the point where it will become favorable to human development.

It would be extremely unfortunate if this community should be panicked into abandonment of the neighborhood school as an illusory means of eliminating de facto segregation, particularly since to do so has no where achieved this purpose.

PROGRAMS FOR MEETING THE PROBLEMS OF DE FACTO SEGREGATION

Preliminary to describing the Washington program for amelioration of the deficiencies of de facto segregation, an evaluation of the efforts of the New York City School System to stem the tide of de facto segregation should be reviewed. This school system should be wise enough to learn from the mistakes of others.

According to the New York State Education Commissioners' Advisory Committee Report, nothing that the New York City schools have done to date to reduce segregation has been successful.

The report declared: "Despite Open Enrollment, rezoning, and associated efforts, segregation, city-wide, has not been reduced. On the contrary, the over-all level of segregation has increased."[1/]

Again, the authors of the report declared: "We must conclude that nothing undertaken by the New York City Board of Education since 1954, and nothing proposed since 1963, has contributed or will contribute in any meaningful degree to desegregating the public schools of the city."[2/]

The foregoing findings plus the highly publicized results of the efforts to achieve better racial balance in certain other major cities undoubtedly account for the reasonably tentative nature of Urban League proposals as outlined in its report.

1/ "Desegregating the Public Schools of New York City." A Report prepared for the Board of Education of the City of New York by The State Education Commissioners' Advisory Committee on Human Relations and Community Tensions, May 12, 1964, page 5.

2/ Ibid., page 8.

The following are ways in which the effect of de facto segregation (cultural isolation) can be ameliorated:

1. The Urban League emphasis upon the need for maximum educational opportunity for every pupil is strongly endorsed by the schools and the Board of Education. This objective is being sought through a system of community schools with adjunct facilities in such fields as vocational, technical, and special education.

The program is predicated upon the idea that the community school wil prevail despite the current attacks upon it.

Concerned American parents of all races do everything they can to seek good school and neighborhood conditions for their young.

A school must be of such quality that the parents will have confidence in it. If the parents choose to live in the neighborhood of a particular school, they will demand the right to send their children to that school. No authority at any level will long be able to resist that demand. As long as it exists, the neighborhood school will exist.

To provide the maximum in educational opportunity, the Board of Education will continue to seek the development of total educational services. By total is meant a school operation so complete, comprehensive, and varied that every child no matter how special his needs will be offered the services needed.

2. Though schools serve a community they must not, however, be isolated from the total school system and the community. Along with much local control under the principal with the advice of her

community there must also be opportunity for cultural interchange among the staff, pupils, and parents of that school and those of other schools. School provincialism, whatever the reason for it, cuts down on learning opportunities.

There must be a deliberate expansion of already extensive opportunities for cultural exchanges. These should occur among white and Negro pupils, pupils of one section of the city and another, pupils in different economic circumstances, and pupils with different career objectives.

Cultural diffusion can be enhanced by an increase in inter-visitation by school groups, jointly prepared assembly programs, shared dramatic and music activities, regional conferences on themes of interest to pupils, and participation in city-wide civic activities.

Community agencies such as churches and civic organizations should assume greater leadership in developing enriched cultural experiences for the city's youth, particularly to provide biracial opportunities for civic experience.

American society is fundamentally stratified. The tendency of people to form groups by occupations, religions, race, and national origins, creates many barriers to understanding and, in fact, stimulates the growth of deep-seated antagonism among the elements of American society. Antagonisms tend to develop between rural and urban dwellers, among the inhabitants of sections and regions in this nation, between labor, the professions, and management. As a counter measure to divisiveness in a pluralistic society, a strong program of intergroup education is needed.

While the stress point is now racial, the problem of cultural isolation touches all Americans to some degree. It should be dealt with on a total scale.

3. Services should conform to the needs within the schools. This means that where cultural lag exists special school and social services should be provided. Examples are stepped-up counseling and psychological services, better provisions for special education, funds for travel, increased supplies of teaching aids. The school administration will study the possibility of setting up a variable formula for assigning school services.

4. While staffing standards should generally be uniform, specially trained teachers of both races should be assigned to the schools with the greater cultural isolation.

5. Opportunities for teachers and officers to study the unique problems of education in culturally isolated schools should be increased with, if possible, the cost to be borne by the school district. The budget should provide funds for research and development in this field.

6. School officers and teachers should make opportunities for pupils to see, hear, and know leaders in government, business, science, literature, and sports. The help given by Robert F. Kennedy illustrates the value of such experiences in motivating and encouraging the youth of this city. A central clearing house for supplying this need may well be organized under the Urban Service Corps.

7. No school should be publicly designated as culturally isolated and limited. Too much attention to problems and too little emphasis upon the strengths of any school discourages the pupils and teachers.

The current national tendency to describe all colored schools as automatically inferior is degrading, unfair, and inaccurate. Race does not determine the quality of achievement in a school. It does not pre-determine the level of cultural experiences of an individual.

The recommendation for the District schools is that the present deliberate effort to supply the educational needs of every school be continued and stepped up without the use of stereotypes in describing any school.

8. The policy of open enrollment permitting the transfer of pupils from overcrowded to under-capacity buildings should be continued. Specified conditions for eligibility for transfer must be clearly defined in educational terms without racial overtones. Transportation must be supplied by the parent until the capacity of the neighborhood school is increased to meet the need of that community.

9. Education in human relations should be stepped up by the acquisition of school personnel specializing in this field and assigned to this responsibility full time. The Superintendent's recommendation for the employment of a specialist in human relations should be approved as presented or in a form acceptable to the Board.

10. The school system should continue to step up its experimental approach to learning problems while holding to and improving the present systematic, structured, teacher-directed instruction implicit in the Amidon concept. Carefully designed innovations should be encouraged, provided that adequate research techniques are employed.

11. The schools should be staffed to increase contact with the homes. The summer counseling program for dropouts should be broadened so that at least one home visit may be made in the school year. The classroom walls should be extended to include the homes.

12. Where home conditions are such as to make school attendance useless, responsible social agencies should correct these conditions or place such children in constructive residential quarters.

A social order that permits children to be harmed by their home environment is as irresponsible as if it permitted murder to be uncontrolled.

An interagency unit like the United Planning Organization should study the extent of home inadequacy, the kinds of solutions to be devised, and the legal foundations for whatever programs are proposed.

13. The Urban League Report advises the Board of Education as follows:

"It must collect and utilize data on the social needs of the District of Columbia and Metropolitan Washington and develop a comprehensive plan to advance toward racially heterogeneous educational experiences."

The school administration will continue its studies of the educational and social needs of the school population, and will participate in such additional studies as may be proposed by other community agencies.

In any case, the school system will emphasize action research rather than merely theoretical research. Illustrations of action research projects now in operation are the Rehabilitation School for pregnant girls, the Twilight Schools, the Summer Counseling program for potential dropouts, the Model School System, the first action stage of which is the initiation of pre-schools for the model school area.

The need for special research and action on home inadequacy by an interagency unit is re-emphasized here as of foremost importance. Cultural diffusion has little influence upon children with distorted cultural characteristics developed by harmful home experiences.

14. The Superintendent will continue and expand his informal advisory committee on human relations. In this manner communication with the school community may be extended. Through the dialogue method, problems in human relations can be identified and solutions sought.

Where community groups believe that solutions beyond those developed by the school administration are needed, they are entitled to present their views directly to the Board of Education, whose practiced policy has long been to hear any citizen or group who desires to make a presentation.

Having long been aware of the responsibility for "pursuing the effective integration of the classroom,"[1/] the Board of Education

1/ Urban League Report, page 18.

and its staff should continue to maintain this program with the advisory help of all interested community leaders and individual citizens.

Therefore, the Urban League recommendation that the Board of Education set up a permanent advisory council on integration is unnecessary. The Board, it may be certain, will continue to receive and study all proposals on this or any other problem, and through its staff will pursue policies which assure integrative educational experiences in the broadest sense.

SUMMARY

The study made by the Washington Urban League is a superior demonstration of effective group analysis of a community problem. It represents considerable research of the most current literature in the field of de facto segregation. It presents data and concepts that deserve and evoke careful evaluation.

In the foregoing response to the Urban League presentation, the Superintendent has tried to be as objective and realistic as possible. On the basic and persistent goal of the Report, integrative education to the fullest extent possible, the Superintendent, and it is certain, the Board of Education are in complete agreement with the Washington Urban League.

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